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ANOTHER CHAPTER OF PATRIARCHAL HISTORY.

ISAAC AND HIS SONS.

THESE persons fill the space in the Bible between Abraham and Joseph. Each of them is a character distinct, peculiar, interesting; each the type of a numerous class in every age.

In order to understand and appreciate them, it is necessary to study them as we do the men of any other history, freely, without traditional biases; without supposing that one is necessarily better or greater than the other, because he happens to have a more honored name, — judging them solely by those facts recorded of them respectively, by which character is indicated. As in Abraham's sons, disregarding common opinion and tradition, we knew no difference between Ishmael and Isaac, except that which their lives disclosed; so of the sons of Isaac, — Esau and Jacob, — let their lives decide which is the more to be honored, the more to be imitated. Let our judgment of them be formed in this way, and not from the prejudices of Jews even, though perpetuated in eminent Christians.

And first ISAAC, let us look at *him*; son of the old age of his parents; a gift long desired, and at length vouchsafed under circumstances which justified them in regarding it as a special token of divine favor. His birthplace was the extreme south of Canaan, where his father had temporarily pitched his tents, in a district held by a petty sovereign named Abimelech. In the

year of the world one thousand nine hundred and eighty (about), he first saw the light. His name signifies "laughter;" and he was called by it, either on account of the great joy created by his birth, or because of a circumstance anterior to it which the reader may see more particularly described by consulting his Bible in this place. Altogether it evidently appeared to his aged, but sprightly, warm-hearted, laughter-loving mother, a ludicrous affair; though she could not but see in it the wonderful hand of God.

The first incident related of Isaac is that of a festival being made on the day of his weaning; an incident which, though unimportant in itself, except as showing a pleasant custom of the time, was the cause of a very serious rupture in his father's family. Young Ishmael, his half-brother, born of the Egyptian woman Hagar, then a lad of sixteen or seventeen years, for some reason did not enter into the spirit of the occasion; but, treating it with derision or petulance, his conduct awakened the displeasure of Isaac's mother to such a degree — for she was a spirited woman — that she demanded that both he and his mother should be immediately expelled from the family; and that he, though the eldest son, should never be an heir with *her* son of their father's estate. Rather a rough measure for one uniformly so kind! The demand was, of course, very painful to Abraham; for to him Ishmael was as dear as Isaac. Nevertheless, to keep the peace, — ah! how many sacrifices of right are made for that, — he consented. It was a very sad thing for him to do; but he found his grief not a little consoled by a divine intimation, that, although Isaac should be his proper successor in respect to family honors and religious promises, Ishmael should also become the head of a great people.

And so, at Sarah's stern behest, poor Hagar and her son go forth, with nothing but a little bread and a bottle of water to subsist upon, — go forth, solitary, wandering, into a wilderness; led by no human hand, but protected by Him who is everywhere the support of the helpless, and the consolation of the afflicted! With heavy hearts, anxious and afraid, they travel on, not knowing whither they go, till, overcome by sorrow and fatigue, they can walk no longer. And then the mother, beholding her boy prostrate and almost lifeless, having covered him with leaves and shrubs, withdraws from him "a good way off," in utter despair,

and sits down; "for she said," in the touching words of the narrative, "let me not see the death of the child; and she sat over against him, and lift up her voice and wept." And it came to pass, — no thanks to Abraham and Sarah though, — that, as she wept and sighed, there came down into her anguished bosom a thought which gave her confidence, and in the strength of it she opened her eyes and looked around; and, as she looked, she descried a well of water near by, from which she immediately drew, and hastened to give of it to her exhausted son. It revived him, and she was thus fortified for further struggle. It need only be added here, that he succeeded, by the use of the bow, in sustaining himself and his mother in the unsettled region called Paran, till a change in their fortune occurred.

The next thing we hear of Isaac, after the weaning celebration, is the part he bore in the transaction on Moriah, in which he came so nigh losing his life by the hand of his father. Then a young man of twenty or more, he exhibited in that trying hour those characteristics of meekness, gentleness, confiding affection towards his father, and piety to God, which strongly marked his whole life. And if, in this trial, Abraham's faith was marvellous, the quiet and uncomplaining submission of Isaac was very lovely. Yet this submission, and his whole deportment at the time, show him to have possessed but little energy of character, and to have been much better fitted for living at home, provided for by his wealthy father, than to go abroad and seek his fortune. He was a gentle boy, an inoffensive youth, imbued with the spirit of religion; and, as a young man, was exemplary in conduct, kind in temper, sincere in worship, and thus pleased the Lord. He was all this, and for all this let him be praised! But there was wanting in him that force, decision, life of purpose and character, which would have made him much more efficient as a man, a much greater man, — perhaps not, however, a better.

After the happy return of father and son from the mountain of sacrifice to their dwelling, Abraham received pleasant tidings from his old friends at Haran, where he buried his father, informing him of the good health of his brother Nahor; that he was married, and that he was blessed with a quite numerous family. It was just at this period of his life that Isaac's mother died; a peculiarly heavy affliction to him, since she had regarded him from his infancy with the fondest affection, which he had returned

in a filial love and duty the most devoted. He was then in his thirty-eighth year, and had probably never known or felt the want of any other female companion and friend. And even then, in his loneliness and mourning, he seems — quiet man! — not to have been moved of *himself* to endeavor, as well as he could, to supply her place, content to live on with his aged father, sharing his grief, and extracting such comfort as he was able from his situation, and especially from his pure and simple religion. But, at length, that father begins to feel the silver cord of his life loosening, and to perceive that the hour is nigh, when, with his lamented Sarah, he will lie down to his rest in the consecrated sepulchre of Macpelah. And, as that time hastens, he becomes more solicitous to provide for the domestic happiness of his affectionate but bachelor son. He supposes that he will wish to “change his situation;” but knowing his disinclination to adventure, or to any enterprise that would take him away from home, he fears that he may be betrayed into a matrimonial alliance with a daughter of some one of the families amongst whom they were sojourning in the land of Canaan. It was natural that he should prefer a different “connection” for his son, — a family in closer sympathy with him, and cherishing religious views more nearly like his own than any in that region. Accordingly, entrusting the whole matter to a favorite servant, — for the son appears hardly to have been consulted at all, — he makes him take a solemn oath that he will not favor the marriage of Isaac to a daughter of the Canaanites, but that he will go himself to the country whence Abraham came, and bring back thence a wife for his son. Considering the age at which Isaac had arrived at the period when these arrangements were made, one is left to marvel at the disinterested equanimity with which he appears to have regarded them. But it is evident, that in this, as in all things, he deferred to the superior wisdom of that parent whom he looked upon (and rightly so) as the chosen servant of the Most High.

Not long after the oath, which was required in the deepest spirit of religion, under the most awe-inspiring conviction of God’s presence, had been administered, Eliezer, the head-servant of Abraham, taking ten camels, and whatever else he deemed necessary for the novel enterprise, set out on his journey to Mesopotamia, to the city of Nahor, Abraham’s brother. The circumstances attending his arrival are familiar to every reader of

the Bible. They are related in a style so graphic, so touchingly simple, so life-like, that, as we read the narrative, we feel ourselves carried back to those primitive times, and witnesses of the engagement entered into between Rebekah and her friends on one part, and the servant of Abraham on the other.

It is a noticeable fact, the *religiousness* of this servant. He had been instructed in the pure faith and worship of his master; and therefore, when he comes near the city where his journey terminates, and his negotiations are to begin, and stops near a well just at evening, the time when women go out to draw water, he lifts up his soul to heaven and cries: "O Lord God of my master Abraham! I pray thee, send me good speed this day, and show kindness unto my master Abraham." He then asks that God would ratify the choice which he has determined to make on this wise. When the young women come to draw water, he will ask one of them to give him drink; and, if she courteously complies, and offers at the same time drink for his camels, he will select her. He will take such kindness as an intimation from God, and be encouraged by it to persevere till his end is gained. And the Lord hearkened to his prayer. Soon, even before he had finished his supplication, there came to the well the very person whom, of all others in the city, he would have chosen, — a grand-daughter of Nahor, — with her pitcher upon her shoulder. "She was very fair to look upon." Had she been quite otherwise, he might have waited perhaps till another came, before he ventured to apply his test by asking her for drink; for then personal beauty was thought more of than even now, since there were fewer accomplishments of an intellectual kind to counterbalance the want of it. The servant proceeded: "Let me, I pray thee, drink a little water of thy pitcher." And she said, "Drink, my lord; and she hastened and let down her pitcher upon her head, and gave him drink." Then she said, "I will draw water for thy camels also; and she ran again unto the well, and drew for all his camels." What sweet and graceful kindness! Meantime, he is wrapt in joyful amazement, wondering whether it can be that a good Providence is so soon to fulfil his desires. In this state of excited hope, he advances — not unwisely as our human nature is constituted — one step further, and offers her a small but brilliant present; a golden pendant, weighing half a shekel, and a pair of bracelets, weighing ten shekels. So far

well. Then he ventures to ask her name; and then whether the situation of her father's house would admit of his being lodged there. On receiving a gratifying answer, he cannot repress his gratitude, but bows down his head, and worships in such words as reveal his connections: "Blessed be the Lord God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of his mercy and his truth. I being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren." And now comes Rebekah's turn for surprise and joy. She has glad tidings, and she runs to tell her mother and her brother Laban. All is gladness through the household. The brother hastens to show hospitality, and welcome the stranger within his gates. Every thing is done for him and his attendants, which their condition as messengers of one so honored, as Abraham demands, — water provided for their feet; straw and provender and room for their camels; food for themselves to eat. But mark the eagerness of the servant in his duty. He refuses to take a morsel of food till he has made known his errand; and that he proceeds to unfold, rehearsing all that had transpired from the first opening of the subject by his master to his interview with Rebekah at the well. When he had concluded, so providential did the whole appear to Bethuel, Rebekah's father, and Laban her brother; so plainly did they see the finger of God in it, and so well pleased were they to be thus remembered by their distinguished kinsman, that they could interpose no objections. "The thing proceedeth from the Lord," they said. "Behold, Rebekah is before thee: take her, and go; and let her be thy master's son's wife, as the Lord hath spoken." (*The Lord hath spoken.* See here what that phrase meant sometimes in those Scripture days.) And now the servant, with his accustomed piety, becoming as it was fervent, again worships the Lord, bowing himself to the earth. The object of his journey is attained. Little remains further to do but to return to his master, bearing the precious treasure he had obtained; yet something. For he has presents richer than those he placed at first in Rebekah's hands. These he opens and distributes, — jewels of silver and jewels of gold and raiment to Rebekah, and costly things to her mother and brother.

The arrangement between the contracting parties having been completed, it remains to obtain Rebekah's consent. She is asked, "Wilt thou go with this man?" The answer is characteristic.

It is simple: "I will go;" decided enough! "I will go," and with no delay she set out with an entire stranger, to meet only strangers, to be the bride of a stranger. We may imagine, but cannot know, her thoughts, nor the emotions that swelled in her bosom, as she pursued her journey. Did she know what her reception would be? No. Did she know that the California she was going to would be a pleasant land to her? No. Did she know that her betrothed would be a person to interest her heart? No. But she trusted, — she trusted in God. Her family were religious. She knew that her uncle Abraham was so, — eminently so. From what she had seen of his servant, she might justly have inferred that he had brought up his family religiously; and so she had reason to think that she might safely entrust herself to him who was to be her husband.

And now the journey is completed. The long suspense is nearly over. At a distance she espies a man walking by himself, "calm as a summer's evening," and is told, "That is Isaac." "Indeed!" "Yes; he has gone out 'into the field at even-tide to meditate.'" Approaching him, — how inimitably graceful and becoming! — she lights from off her camel, and spreads a veil over her face, according to the custom; and thus and there is presented to that son of Abraham, in whom, it was promised, all the families of the earth should be blessed. And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and she became his wife. It is added: "And he loved her, and Isaac was comforted of his mother's death!"

Scarcely could a marriage have taken place promising more conjugal happiness than this. The personal character of Isaac, without reproach, excellent. He had shown himself a most faithful son, — no slight ground for confidence that he would prove a good husband. His father was a prince, of large possessions; and, in his spirit and life, a friend and worshipper of the only living and true God. Rebekah was beautiful, modest, of pleasing manners, of robust health, accomplished, affectionate, and, like her husband, of strong religious sentiments. Here, then, was laid, we should think, the foundation for much domestic happiness. And there was. But, as no state is wholly exempt from trial, it could not be reasonably supposed that they should altogether escape it. Years, however, rolled on with them evenly, — several years; no incident occurring of sufficient importance to

be noted; no birth in their family; no death among their near kindred.

Twenty years thus glide away before their hearts are made happy and their homes enlivened by the voices of children. At the age of sixty, Rebekah becomes mother of two children at a birth. Happy mother! Happy in their birth; but, as often happens, quite unhappy afterwards, she and her husband, too, in some of the events of their lines. For how little can we know, at the moment we are blessing God for the gift of a child, how much sorrow, perchance, that same child may cost us! Esau and Jacob are born. And here we pause.

J. W. T.

(To be continued.)

THE TRIUMPH OF ART OVER NATURE.

WHAT I am about to relate is one of many instances of the power of taste. It is even looked upon by many as the most remarkable victory of cultivation over all the infelicities of a poor soil, a monotonous plain, an unattractive panorama, the destitution of such noble mountains, and monarch-forests, and majestic rivers, as our own. It is not truly a conquest over nature; rather is it the submission of a lower spirit to a higher; the development of a better, though not the best life. The good time is coming when similar transformations will be wrought by truth, holiness, and love.

I like to recall this charmed scene too, because it is the effect of peace. Had the storm of war howled over this Bavarian plain as it has around Acre, how little would remain to engage the notice of the traveller! — not even those ancient ruins which carry one back to the crusader's time, to Saracenic splendor, to manifestations of religion, the more graceful that they are perishing. But this central capital, having neither had its finances drained by huge armies and costly navies, nor its buildings bombarded by the fearful modern artillery, nor its suburbs burned by Goth and Vandal hosts, nor its citizens swept away as conscripts to garrison distant towns upon strange soil, has silently and steadily concentrated its little resources upon its own embellishment; has invented some kinds of art, and carried others far

beyond their common standard; has peopled itself with architects, sculptors, painters, engravers of the highest order; is preparing for its future still nobler renown. — But to my tale.

Munich, in the last century, was an ordinary, castellated town, not so quaint as Nuremberg, not so well situated as Dresden, not so interesting as Berlin or Vienna. Now it has become world-famed for its palaces, its galleries, its public buildings, its achievements in all the fine arts. And the most of this transformation has been wrought by one man, with a very moderate income for a modern monarch; but devoting his whole means, with actual self-denial, to the purchase and production of painting and statuary. It must be remembered, when anybody censures the Bavarian Louis for not having built roads and factories, instead of Pinacotheks and Glyptotheks, that these things are all public property, thrown open nearly every day, without a cent's charge; shown under the best regulations, with every imaginable convenience, to stranger and to citizen alike. You need not wait for a particular day, through a limited season of the year, or carry your way-worn passport, or register your name, as at the British Museum, or be puzzled as at the Vatican by hours which nobody understands, and which seem to inconvenience everybody except the peremptory officials. No matter if the king is in the palace, you are still shown the more celebrated apartments, and every part and picture explained, — even the keen features of *Lola Montes*, — and quite enough enjoyed for one afternoon. And not the least pleasant part is, that half the company are very common sort of people, who never think of pretending to enjoy the more elevated kind of pictures among us, and who here go through the "*Nibelungen Lied*," the *Landscape Greece*, the *Historical Germany*, upon the frescoed walls, with quite enough enthusiasm, though not any too much discrimination and taste.

One of these series, occupying a suite of apartments, but to be removed to a new and modern gallery, is a discovery characteristic of Munich. The pressing want, especially where such an immense amount of fresco-painting is in demand, was something which should not perish by exposure. Some of the gayest pieces around the capital have nearly vanished, under the combined assaults of sun and rain, particularly a superb gateway. But this *Greece*, by Prof. Rottman, seems to be proof against injury. The colors are so fixed into the rock-like cement, that

not even the smoke of a chimney will obscure, or any exposure to snow and rain fade them. Mr. Martineau mentioned the discovery as gratifying in the highest degree; and at some future day it will interest us in America. It is worthy of the spot which gave the first lithograph to the world.

I should far exceed the limits appropriate to an article like this in a religious journal, were I to mention half the interesting peculiarities of this Athens of Southern Germany. The most impressive recent painting in the present "low estate" of the art is here: Prof. Kohlbach's Destruction of Jerusalem; a picture that, once seen, can never be forgotten. It appears to me just as distinct after six months, as if six hours had only passed since the studio was so generously thrown open to two Americans without any introduction.

Here it is: At the right of you, a small Christian party moving off in evident triumph. Some Jewish children are imploring to go with their old playmates; but the stern elders do not recall the curse, "His blood be upon us and *our children*." In the background, the Roman general is leading on his host, confident enough, yet solemn as a destroying angel. In the middle are the frightful self-martyrdoms of fanatical Jews; the high-priest stabbing himself; his beautiful children bleeding to death around him; his aged parent just before him, with a drawn sword, ready for the same fate. At the extreme left, the Wandering Jew, flying, and tearing his bosom as if in the fresh agony of a young remorse; the gorgeous temple wrapped in flames; seven destroying angels coming down with their curses. A startling picture, conceived with power, executed with spirit, relieving its horror a little by its exquisite female figures; yet, as a whole, little less appalling than the thing itself.

Other palaces as vast as that of Munich, and more sumptuously furnished, are easily found; but no other has been illustrated by one presiding taste, so as to present a connected, and yet entirely distinct, series of paintings in each suite of apartments. And it is a relief indeed from Sevres china, Gobelins tapestry, and the tawdriness of overdone decorations, to pass through grand halls, where the mind is left undisturbed to the effect of not always the best paintings, but the best then and there to be procured. It is not a little satisfaction, too, to see hundreds of excellent artists sustained in this isolated capital,

quite out of the line of ordinary travel, by the direct or indirect influence of royal patronage. Alas that it should be seen here, too, that these things have no necessary connection with sound morals; that the same social corruption fattens on the art-loving banks of the Iser, in the smile of royalty, as at other European courts; and that nearly half the children born have no natural, legal protector. No stranger would suspect such a state of things, when the streets seem so still, and the people so retiring; but sad stories of domestic infidelity are told and believed here as at Vienna.

One of the national monuments, now erecting, is as great a wonder as the Sphinx. The common people name it "the Bavaria." A colossal female stands crowning a lion; a grand patriotic emblem. You ascend ninety feet into this bronze-lady's head, which is large enough for a good-sized tea-party; the whole forming one of the best works of the lamented Schwanthaler. But this is only the presiding genius of the scene. She stands facing the city and the race-course; and, back of her and upon either side, is a lofty, open marble portico for statues to the present and future heroes of Bavaria; a shrine which, filled by the real benefactors of the land, may well deserve the admiration of crowds of future pilgrims; but, occupied by mere names of office, by fortunate place-hunters, by court-parasites, will receive a contempt from which it can never recover.

It would need a volume to describe the Pinacothek and Glyptothek. The statuary is remarkable, not only for occupying the most elegant building of the kind in Europe, and having every advantage of arrangement, but for rejoicing in the only complete collection of Etrurian marbles; and superb indeed they are. It is curious that the British Museum actually offered more than was paid by Bavaria, and before the purchase was made, but now has to mourn an irreparable deficiency.

The Pinacothek enjoys the pre-eminence of having been sifted out from several royal collections; and so containing (as is frequently said by a little exaggeration) not one poor picture, but far less inferior pieces than the renowned Pitti Palace of Florence, or the mammoth collection at Dresden. Besides an immense collection of engravings, a hall of vases, and a Loggia of the finest frescoes, there are thirty-two saloons, so abundant in masterpieces, that even Vandyke, Tintoretto, and Rubens have

sometimes to stand nearly out of sight in order to accommodate Murillo and Domenichino, Guido and Raphael; and yet a New York merchant, whom I met here, saw the whole in two hours, and was quite satisfied with a glance at Raphael's Holy Family, Rubens's Falling Angels, Guido's Assumption of the Virgin, and Murillo's Beggar Boys, a mere copy of which makes the pride of a certain collection in England! What an idea intelligent Europeans must form of our appreciation of art! What wonder that poor imitations pass current among us for pictures which wealth cannot buy, whose beauty is the world's praise, whose almost inspiration once awakened devotion at Catholic shrines, and now fails not to stir the very depths of every living soul!

F. W. H.

THE CHURCH.

THE church of God, — I use the expression now as applied to the building consecrated to the service of our heavenly Parent upon earth. What a holy habitation must it seem to every thoughtful mind, this temple devoted to the highest capacities of our nature, where we may expect the peculiar presence of the Most High! Upon reflection, one would suppose we could not enter the portals of such a place without feelings of reverence, and even awe. We are as guests in the immediate earth-dwelling of our God, surrounded on every side by the invisible presence of angels. This influence, pervading all, must and would affect every meditative mind, even did we only enter and sit in silent communion. And yet with what preparation of heart do we attend, sabbath after sabbath, this sacred gathering?

Having dedicated, with most solemn ceremonies, this temple, it is no longer property, but a free-will offering to Heaven. From our midst, we choose an apostle of our own faith to minister unto us. His life devoted to the cause, he makes it his duty and constant aim to revive us spiritually, from the well-spring of eternal life. He comes to us as one clad with the divine blessing, — a human being temporarily acknowledged as the humble representative of the wisdom of God.

This much would we say, in answer to those persons who

speak of the church in a trifling manner, as a building made by man, and of no more consideration than any other edifice. We sum up all in saying, the purpose for which the house is erected sanctifies and makes holy the spot. With what thoughts, then, should we go forth from our homes to worship together, with angels and men, the great Creator of all?

It is the custom, generally, to clothe the body in its best attire, to array it in graceful and becoming habiliments, selecting colors that harmonize, making the outward a pleasant picture upon which we can complacently gaze. Do we thus clothe the inner man? Is the drapery of holiness gracing us with a meek and quiet spirit, and the harmony of universal love to God and man reflecting rays of heavenly light from our own immortality? Few of us can, with much truth, make the assertion, that we clothe the inward as carefully as we decorate the mere semblance, the outward, visible symbol of ourselves, — the frail, perishing body. Why is it so? Is it not that our materiality of nature has been under more instruction; that the supposed wants of the body have been encouraged to the neglect of those real wants of the true life within? If we come to this conclusion after study and reflection, what is our duty as regards attendance upon what is termed public worship? Should we not go in all humility, even the most learned among us, as pupils in the school of Christ? — with meekness and love, ready to receive divine truth; discriminating only that the medium through which it is conveyed is imperfect, but receiving the spirit of religion with loving kindness, welcoming it as a blessed necessity of our immortal being. Should we go as critics? — to sit in judgment upon the appointed teacher? Would it not be well to remember, it is not the man alone we hear? he is the interpreter of the holy word of God. To be sure, oratory, or a graceful manner, may convey the truth in pleasanter strains to the mind; but the least talented should receive respect and attention, his office being the same. A right spirit, willing to hear the most gifted, could be profited either by the inculcation of some new truths, or the farther strengthening of those already imbibed. We are yet as babes in the knowledge of that which truly enlightens and makes glorious the object of our creation. Then, however feeble the instrument, the vocation should be honored.

Various are the motives of persons attending the house of

God. Some go for display; others to gaze around the audience, and see who may be present, to learn the latest fashion, to discover who, for the first time, perchance, may be clad in some new attire; others, from curiosity to hear and pronounce upon the talents of the preacher. If the singing has been considered fine, music may be the attraction. If the minister is young and handsome, he, the man, may be the magnet for the younger female portion of the assembly. Some really go to hear, for the time being; but the frivolous conversation, on their return home, dissipates all the good they might otherwise have received. Few there are, but still there *are* a few, who go in meekness and sincerity to be taught to treasure up the truth, making evident application of it to their own character; not hearing for others, considering this or that remark as having a powerful bearing upon the circumstances or faults of a friend or neighbor. Would there were more of us going up to worship God in the beauty of holiness, — the only spirit worthy of our true nature, the incense alone that rises upward as an acceptable sacrifice from the altar of human hearts! If we conscientiously erect and dedicate a temple to the Almighty; if we designate the purposes for which it shall in general be used, — should we not act up to our principles, and not make mockery of ourselves by the strange inconsistency manifested in our conduct as regards the establishment of a church and its purposes? Does not this subject offer itself for reflection?

Let me relate specimens of conversations I have heard upon the different points above mentioned.

Mr. B. Good morning, friend Thomas; going to church, I presume.

Mr. H. Yes, sir: will you accompany me?

Mr. B. No, thank you: one place is as good as another for me to worship in. My ideas are not so narrow as to be confined within the four walls of any building. I do not consider it a matter of consequence to go and sit in a particular spot to perform *my* devotions.

Mr. H. Surely, Mr. B., you would not abolish the church?

Mr. B. Oh, no! It is a very good thing for those who feel it *necessary*, to gather, in an appointed place, to worship upon the sabbath. They have the privilege of so doing, even as I exercise what I consider my right concerning the same.

Mr. H. You are an influential man, Mr. B., one looked up to with much respect. What effect upon the community do you think your non-attendance upon public worship likely to have? A person well educated as you have been, and one who is deemed worthy of holding public offices of importance, — I cannot feel he is so free to act for his own individual pleasure, without any regard to the effect produced by pursuing such a course.

Mr. B. I disagree with you, sir. I think I have a private privilege concerning religious opinions, which I also have a right to exercise.

Mr. H. You say you would not give up the church; you undoubtedly feel that good comes from its institution, yet you do all you can to debase it by so disregarding its intention. Those who, through ignorance or disinclination, have no desire to be instructed in religion, would have no possible method for such teaching, did they not one day in seven congregate in this manner. These persons who would gladly be excused from what the not utterly annihilated conscience yet whispers in the most obdurate heart, lull the still small voice to comparative rest, by quoting the example of persons highly esteemed as you are, in not only the political but moral world. Do you then, my dear sir, feel you have undoubted right to exercise your individual gratification with regard to its influence?

Mr. B. I have not thought much of this subject, only in a selfish light. I esteem you as a sincerely good man, sir, and will consider what you have said.

In farther illustration, let me state the following conversation: —

“Fine preaching we have had to-day, Mrs. L.”

“Do you think so? It seemed to me the young man’s text was the glorification of himself, under division and subdivision of display in oratory, manner, and taste. The upraised eye did not appear to me as if the soul was absorbed in the spirituality of its gaze, disregardless of the effect produced upon his countenance. Neither did the manner in which the little, white hand was extended betoken so much earnestness of purpose as the graceful wave to set off to advantage the delicate texture of the skin. For my part, I was so amused watching the studied method of his delivery, and his perfect, apparent satisfaction with himself, that I have even forgotten what the youth *was* trying to prate about.

But were I to suggest what the portion of Scripture *might* have been he was endeavoring to explain, I should have thought these words appropriate, from the Gospel of St. John, nineteenth chapter and fifth verse: 'Behold the man!'"

"Indeed, Mrs. L., I did not notice the young man's appearance much, I was so impressed with some parts of his sermon: they applied particularly well to a neighbor of mine,—his very condition portrayed. Were this man not a stranger, I should presume he wrote the discourse for the sole benefit of Dr. Trouble. I hope the doctor was present, and will improve under the treatment he has this day received."

Not far off from these two persons, quite a merry conversation was taking place:—

"Mary, Jeannie Poor has at last compressed her head into a new bonnet: it has so long been hid in that dark-looking coal-hod of an affair, I had no idea it would seem so well developed, exhibited as it now appears in the tiny fashion of the day. Her face will have the semblance of deformity, if she must wear this through the range of the next seven years' change. What a lovely dress Louise had on! But the minister's wife,—is she not antediluvian?"

Melancholy as we feel the necessity of such descent in these illustratory fragments, they are only true to the fact; and, would we amend, we must probe.

Is not this subject of the church, the good effects resulting from its appointment, and our duty regarding it, a proper theme for sincere reflection? As true members of society upon earth, looking forward to communion with the eternal church of God in heaven, can we neglect any means which will enable us to attain the result intended,—life everlasting?

C. L. P.

VARIETY. — Human life is like one large piece of patchwork: the dark and light colors are adjusted so as to produce effect. They may be nicely fitted, so that each square shall be in beautiful harmony with every other. This affliction and that blessing, this cross and that comfort, all meet; and, being mingled, make a fairer and more attractive fabric than were all the covering but one color, or life but one incessant sunshine.

H. S. E.

TO A FRIEND.

ON THE DEATH OF A SON.

LOCKED is the casket, and the key is thine,
 And treasured next thine heart with earnest care;
 But oh! bethink thee of the love divine
 That did from thee that hidden jewel bear:

Treasured and guarded by a love more fond
 Than, lonely mother, could thy heart bestow;
 Enduring ever in a holier bond
 Than earthly tenderness could ever know.

If, in our mortal dreaming of that land,
 With our weak sight we've pictured it so fair,
 What is the bliss we cannot understand,
 Oh! watchful spirits in the Father's care?

Perfect and fair shall shine thine angel-boy, —
 Bright with the lustre of his own pure soul;
 Seraphs attend him on his path of joy,
 A tiny part of that All-perfect whole.

Bathed is his vesture in a flood of light;
 O'er his young brow a dazzling radiance streams;
 His eye has caught the seraphs', beaming bright, —
 Bright with the glory of celestial beams.

His voice has caught that air-harp's heavenly tone;
 His ear has learnt that harmony divine:
 Cease then, oh cease that melancholy moan!
 Mother! is not that joyous angel thine?

PEACE AND JOY IN BELIEVING.

THE deepest peace and the highest joy of human hearts come from the sight and love of God. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." To repeat the thought in other phrase: the firmest foundation of intellectual rest, and the fullest fountain of spiritual gladness, are the recognition and embrace of a Divine Wisdom working in all the ways of the world, and a Divine Affection waiting in all the recesses of the soul. We desire, and shall now try, to illustrate these statements a little, and recommend them to the gentle and thoughtful reader.

He who *realizes*, as every Christian should realize, the constant presence and action of God in every hour and place, as the immediate Cause of things and the direct Ruler of events; who feels that the infinite Spirit is the pervading life and the moving force of the universe; who believes that God decrees all the occurrences that happen to his creatures, for purposes of unmixed beneficence, and that there is always an unspeakable nearness of communion between him and his children; — he whose ways of thinking and results of experience assure him of this, may well have a peaceful mind and a happy heart; for the exhaustless serenity and bliss of heaven are consciously flowing through him for ever, filling the capacities of his nature with the satisfactions of so sublime a lot.

The only consistent solution of the eternal problems of human experience has brightened, to such a one, the dark mysteries of time and sense, and set his straining intellect at rest. The only unalloyed, enveloping, and imperishable pleasure — which is a loving communion with God through the diffusing perfections of his interior will, and through the universal glories of his active attributes — bathes the soul of such a one in angelic joy. And so his petty repinings and his superficial griefs are swallowed up in the greatness of his privileges, and lost in the depths of his gratitude. Like Paul, he then has "peace and joy in believing." To be the favored child of God, to receive his visits every moment, to enjoy more and more of his manifestations through eternity, it is enough; he cannot murmur; and, while he feels the mystic Presence, his troubles grow insignificant, and disappear.

To possess a nature and inherit a destiny so glorious is a blessing of such transcendent moment as to absorb his whole being, at times, in rapt contemplation and love. He who knows this experience — and though few of us know it, perhaps, yet there are such persons to the fact that there are such, we cling as to the sheet-anchor of all immortal hopes — has the surest foundation of contentment, the chiefest source and element of blessedness. He cannot allow the unimportant anxieties and cares of this world to annoy him, and destroy his peace; for he remembers, that, let the world move as it will, the Lord closely folds him in his everlasting arms. If he is lonely, an almighty Friend is instantly with him, to hear his prayers, and more than return his love. If he is beset by dangers, a Guardian, unseen but felt, is a shield on his right hand and on his left hand. In the ceaseless play of outward phenomena, dawn and sunset, the round of seasons and the march of systems, he sees the tireless activities of the omnipresent Creator. To his reverential gaze, the mighty splendor of the sky is the starry crown glittering from of old upon the solemn brow of God. He perceives the inspiration of the all-comprehending Intelligence in his thoughts, beholds the smile of the divine Benignity beaming on him from every side, and feels its emanations throbbing in his heart and cherishing his affections. He lives and moves, and has his being, in the bosom of a Father, infinitely tender, wise, and powerful, who blesses his virtuous aspirations, sympathizes with his joys, wipes off his tears, and, in the hour of dying, bears him away to a still more heavenly abode and experience.

Whosoever realizes this, we say, has spiritual peace and happiness, because God himself fills and satisfies the great yearnings of his soul. Fear, grief, misery, and despair are a kind of atheism. They can only be experienced where the all-loving God, for the time, is not felt to be; as ravenous beasts only come forth for their prey in the absence of light. And as the rising sun drives the prowling monsters back to their dens; so, when God lifts the light of his countenance upon us, our cares and wretchedness flee away, and with the fruitions of the Christian faith in his embosoming presence and overseeing goodness we are content. We have "peace and joy in believing."

"A peasant, who had spent all his days in a poor town among the mountains, travelling once to the court of his sovereign, was

so delighted with the splendor and refinement which there surrounded him, that he could never again be satisfied with the homely circumstances and dull routine of his former life. He could not be contented and glad any more, unless the king would permit him to dwell with him in the imperial palace, and be his friend. The monarch, out of the abundance of his goodness, granted his desire, and allowed him to take up his abode in the royal courts, and witness and partake the regal pomp and luxury. And thereafter his soul knew rest and happiness. Ah! so it is with man. When once he has been lifted above the dull, gross things of earth, and has caught a glimpse of the central glories of the spiritual world, he can never again be contented with the poor meagre life of sense which formerly satisfied him. And God, the infinite Sovereign, knowing our aspiring hopes and wishes, is so good that he condescends to fulfil our soaring desires; allowing us to dwell with him in this creation, his gorgeous palace, to gaze admiringly on the procession of his glories, to behold him rule the undisturbed affairs of his empire, and to reciprocate his love, as it were, face to face. When we have sinned, he permits our repentant spirits to feel his encircling arm around them, and to sob their anguish away on his bosom; and, when at last the death-call is heard, it only summons us to a higher apartment, nearer the king's throne. Thus highly favored, shall we not be submissive, peaceful, and joyous throughout all our days? If, indeed, we believe in God, and import into real experience the Christian possibilities of piety, we shall cease to complain; for our annoyances will be lost in the fruitions of a knowledge so consoling and a love so enrapturing.

The medical student, beginning to investigate the constitution and secrets of his physical being, shudders as he lifts the curtain of ignorance from his interior structure, and, gazing upon the awful mysteries laid bare to his mental eye, feels that he is "fearfully and wonderfully made." At first he hardly dares to move, from fear of rending some frail tissue that separates life and death; or breaking some delicate filament that binds the soul to the body; or bursting some thin vein, through which rivers of blood are rushing; or disorganizing some exquisite arrangement, that the touch of a needle's point might spoil for ever. Sometimes he becomes so sensitively conscious of his vital mechanism, and his attention is so morbidly fixed upon the action of certain

organs, that nervous irritation is induced, and disease brought on. But this is an unusual weakness and perversion, not a common nor a legitimate result. The true object of anatomical and physiological knowledge is attained when it teaches a man the laws of his body, and, leading him to avoid all infringements of them, secures to him safety, health, and prolonged life. In like manner, the pious devotee, who, by holy contemplation and prayer, by inward purification and sacred sensibility, has succeeded in lifting up the veil which hides from sensual eyes the essential life and significance of things, and gazes with spiritual vision upon the immanent God, sometimes trembles with fathomless awe and joy at the overwhelming thought that the dread laws of matter and of spirit are the habitual volitions of the infinite Will, incessantly radiating through the universe, and ruling it with unquestionable despotism. He thrills with solemn, exulting emotions at the belief, that the vast realities which flame and roll visibly or invisibly through the ingulfing expanse are a manifestation of the energies of the awful Person who built this limitless fabric, who breathed the breath of life into all creatures, and who is everywhere to be traced moving on his stupendous designs in a course of accomplishment without beginning and without end. The incomprehensible grandeur and the unutterable satisfaction of the truth thus made known to him absorb his whole attention, and he finally loses himself in the wild maze of mysticism, or possibly in the reeling abyss of insanity. Turning from all meaner objects, neglecting the proper occupations of time and sense, he fixes his eyes directly on the absolute Deity, until he is "blasted with excess of light." Communion with God has sometimes reached an intensity, and an extravagance of proportion, that have led to such results. But this is a perversion of its tendency, and an abuse of its nature, and an exaggeration of its prerogatives, which are extremely rare, and of which, among us, there is not the least danger at all. In the turmoil of worldliness, excitement of pleasure, and chill of doubt, which mark our times and our people, we fall far short of the legitimate effect of such a faith as we have been describing. Before being troubled about the evils of excess, let us win the possession of its needful and proper influence, which is to make us completely submissive and grateful, leading us to a glad and hearty conformity and

devotedness to God's decrees in every event. So shall we believe like earnest Christians, and find "peace and joy in believing."

If any one wishes to win the broadest and surest contentment, the divinest and longest happiness, then let him learn that the way they are to be obtained is through conscious recognition of God, and embracing of his holy spirit, in thought, in affection, and in good works. By personal communion with the God and Father of Christ, let him make the old traditions fresh realities. Then, really knowing what it is to believe in the unfailing presence and protection of God's power, wisdom, and love; beholding the inconceivable glories of the Divine attributes through the blue sweeps of space and dazzling glitter of worlds; feeling the ineffable sweetness and eternity of the Divine goodness and truth gushing in his heart and gleaming in his brain, — he shall be able to exclaim from the fervor and fulness of experimental certainty: "Father, thou art my all in all; my rest in toil, my ease in suffering, the balm to heal my broken heart, in storms my peace, in loss my gain, my joy beneath the frown of the world, in shame my glory and my crown, in want my plentiful supply, in weakness my almighty power, in bonds my perfect liberty, my refuge in temptation, my comfort in bereavement, my assurance in doubt, in death my endless life. Sustained, O God! by the delightful thought that thou art ever with me, I will make it my meat and my drink to do thy will, and learn, under whatever circumstances may surround me, to be contented and cheerful." Thus it may be seen that the sight and love of God are the purest, most copious, most abiding of all the possible sources of peace and joy. Who, then, will not endeavor, by purity of heart, fidelity of will, and earnestness of desire, to see the perfect visibleness of the true God, love the infinite loveliness of the good God, and embrace the deathless perpetuity of the living God?

W. R. A.

REPAIRING AND MODERNIZING.

WHEN I began the business of repairing my house, I had no idea it was so needful to do so. There had been for some time a small leak in the drain, and some crevices in the cellar which needed chinking with mortar. There were some cracks, likewise, in the parlor wall, which had been a long time neglected; but the impression that some time we could have the whole done together had been the cause of omitting a part. But there was a dread about beginning. The idea of tearing up, and having layers of brick and hods of mortar about the premises, made me postpone the job. Besides, I knew my own irritability; and the doubt whether I could procure suitable mechanics, who would faithfully keep on until the work was completed, for ever haunted me. At length, however, I proceeded so far as to ask a master-workman to examine the defects, and ascertain pretty nearly the probable expense, and the time it would occupy to do the work. He did so, and reported most voluminously the radical need of so much which ought to be done that still the work was deferred.

Dog-days were approaching, and I had a particular aim that every thing offensive should be removed. I thought now of the broken drain, and resolutely stirred myself to do all that was requisite for health or comfort, consistent with the contents of my purse. Workmen were soon engaged, and the job commenced. In the first place, we ascertained, in removing the planks from the cellar, which was necessary, that the boards were mostly decayed; that the floor was uneven, damp, and mouldy. It did not take me long to decide upon the propriety of introducing cement in place of rotten wood. This was doing the work thoroughly.

Next we came to the drains. These were caved in perfect pathways for rats, and needed entire relaying. Some were to be cut off, and new directions given to others to obviate all disagreeable effluvia. Sundry boards about back passages were to be inserted; and, advancing above, the cracked walls were found so mutilated that it was thought judicious to scrape them, and give a fresh skimming, to make them present an entire smooth surface. When all this was done, "Now," said Mrs.

Jones, "how beautifully gilded paper, with a rich border, would look!" I felt the truth of what she said, but thought only of the extra expense. Then I reflected my wife was an ambitious woman, and had helped me accumulate: why should she not be indulged in this wish? Besides, she did not haunt nor coax me; but I knew her desire, and this seemed to inspire me with the wish to gratify her. I did so. The whole appearance of our parlors was now so beautified that all my neighbors declared it seemed a shame to put down our *old carpets*. Here I began to think if new carpets were wanting, so were new chairs; if new chairs, how the antique sofas and tables and mantel-ornaments would look! All these had grown old with us, and careful usage and continual brushing had preserved our mahogany, so that it shone more brightly every year. But then this scrubbing was hard for Mrs. Jones: why should I inflict upon her what her neighbors had been excused from doing years ago? So I renovated every part, putting in and taking out, transferring and adding, until my house was *almost* perfect.

We were just congratulating ourselves upon the end, and considering in what we could curtail to meet the additional expense we had assumed, but perfectly satisfied with what we had done, when Mr. Beath, the fastidious man, entered.

"So you are finely brushed up?" said he to Mrs. Jones.

"Only looking a little more decent," was my wife's modest reply.

"Why on earth," resumed he, "didn't you take down your folding-doors, and make your parlors like one spacious hall?"

Mrs. Jones looked profound.

"The advantages," resumed Mr. Beath, "would richly repay the outlay. How many times a year do you close those doors?"

Mrs. Jones replied, "Never."

"Then," continued our friend, "I would introduce a fountain in the yard, and the jet would be perfectly discernible from the back parlor windows."

Mrs. Jones's eyes dilated with future prospects. She always had a passion for the beautiful in nature and art. She went so far as to remark, "I wish, Mr. Beath, you had laid the plan for us before we commenced."

The bell rang, and our family physician entered.

"And so you are some of the wise people," remarked the

doctor, who find comfort at home, while everybody else seems seeking it elsewhere." The medical man expatiated upon our airy residence, the breeze from the ocean, the beauty of the western sky, and the true philosophy of keeping in such a home, where solid comforts could be obtained.

Mrs. Jones suggested the remarks from Mr. Beath concerning additional improvements, all of which met with the cordial approbation of the physician. The more air, the greater the assurance of continued health; the more beauties presented to the eye in one's dwelling, the less fear have we of becoming hypochondriacs and mere brooders over temporal ills.

Mrs. Jones thought the folding-doors had better be removed, and the fountain in the yard immediately introduced.

Poor Mr. Jones felt his purse lightened at every suggestion, and inwardly wished he had never introduced a workman about his house.

The clergyman called the same week. To him Mr. Jones always opened his temporal as well as his spiritual interests. Mr. Jones spoke of his "repairing," which had far exceeded the sum he intended, and evidently betrayed some uneasiness about the outlay. Mrs. Jones waved her fan very quickly to and fro, interspersing some remarks upon the propriety of finishing the whole at once.

The worthy parson examined the premises, and sat down. "Well," said he, "Mr. Jones, I see the business of *repairing* is very thoroughly finished, while the business of *modernizing* has no end. It seems to me you have blended the two, whereas they are really widely diverse. I think we may draw an analogy between the two as it respects character. Amendment or repairing of one's character is always reluctantly undertaken, as you entered upon this job. As we begin, too, we are surprised to find so many crevices and cracks where the mortar is gone, to speak metaphorically. We apply the cement, and hardly have we closed one aperture, before we discover another; then the walls need examining, and often they are so battered as to require scraping and skimming pretty deep to rub out all the impressions which have falsely attached themselves to our motives and acts. By and by, however, by a laborious process, we find the work all gone over, and feel that we have to maintain a continual watch to *keep* the premises in a sound condition. Just at this time steps

in the *modernizer*. He holds up the latest fashion, recommends you to pull down part of your structure, speaks little about repairing, but more of glossing over, so that the surface may appear fair; and, by running you off the old beaten track, you become entangled with thorns, lose your path, and never know where to stop.

"Is it not so with you, just now? It is not the *repairing* which has exceeded your expectations, but the proposed modernizing, which lowers the purse. I," quoth he, "once narrowly escaped such a vortex. The improvements of the parsonage were left at my discretion. I thought of tearing down this and that antique niche; but, after all, the whole was in good keeping as it was, and one modern innovation made all the former finish ten times more apparent; so I repaired, and made a comfortable residence within, and directed my improvements without. I planted an orchard, set out shade-trees, made walks and hedges, and, when my means would admit of it, I purchased *trees* instead of *paint*, and you see the result. Posterity, however, will more effectually receive the benefit of my labors; but to me they are not lost. I have been recompensed a thousand times, and reminded, too, that the work of him who *builds* begins immediately to decay, while the work of him who *plants* begins directly to improve."

The movement of Mrs. Jones's fan became less violent, and she never again spoke to Mr. Jones upon the subject of *modernizing*.

H. S. E.

THEY who believe only with the understanding, soon cease almost to believe at all. Even the knowledge which is only of the understanding dwindles and sickens and shrivels. While the God of natural religion is an object of mere belief, Christ is an object of faith; and where faith shrinks up into belief, Christ will almost be lost sight of. To mere speculation, when disjoined from a living, personal, practical faith, he is still as he ever has been, — foolishness. — *Archdeacon Hare*.

THE MINGLING OF SADNESS WITH JOY IN HUMAN EXPERIENCE.

A THANKSGIVING SERMON, BY REV. NATHANIEL HALL.

EZRA, iii. 12, 13: "And many wept with a loud voice; and many shouted aloud for joy; so that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people."

It is in connection with the event of the laying the foundation of the second temple at Jerusalem that this incident is related. In the minds of many who witnessed it, there were touching memories which the event revived. The image of the former temple rose before them; and, as they remembered it, its fair proportions, its majestic greatness, its glorious beauty, they wept. They recalled the days when their eager feet first pressed its hallowed pavement, their hearts swelling and throbbing with the mingled currents of a patriotic and a pious joy, — and they wept. They thought of those, the long departed, in whose endeared companionship they had worshipped there, — and they wept. The event before them was in itself a joyous one, and as such they felt it; it was an event for which God was to be greatly praised, and they did praise him, — but still they wept. Sadness mingled with their joy. Tears were the accompaniment of their festivities. Their rejoicing and their weeping were alike in audibleness.

The incident has more than a mere historical interest. It is the testimony to a universal fact in human nature and human life. It describes what must be familiar to every one who has at all reflected on his own experience. Joy and sadness are not the entirely unallied and separated things which, in the common thought, or at least in the common speech, they are made to be. They are not opposite poles in the world of emotion. They stand not apart in mutual repulsion. Their times and seasons do not come and stay and go, each with an entire exclusion of the other. They are combined in all human experience. Their streams meet and mingle as they flow, and the sparkling current of the one is dashed and tamed by the subtle interfusion of the other. "There is a time to weep," said Solomon, "and a time to laugh." There are seasons in which one or the other of the

emotions thus signalized are so actively prominent, as with propriety and truth to be named by its respective appellation. And yet they who think of them as entirely and exclusively the one or the other, can have but little knowledge of the deeper workings of the heart. "Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful," is another of the wise man's sayings. A tone of sadness, a breathing of melancholy, not perhaps made audible, nor often even self-recognized, is yet, I think, to be detected among the fading vibrations of each peal of merriment. And it does not come of any false condition of the inner man, any disordered action, any untuning of the viewless harp: in our best and truest states, our spiritually happiest moods, we are conscious of it.

It has been said, — and it may be named as a somewhat analogous fact with that we are considering, — that, to the attentive ear of the discriminating listener, a touch of sadness, or at least of plaintiveness, is more or less perceptible in the inarticulate voices of nature, even in those whose prevailing and obvious expression is that of joy: in the notes of birds, whether it be their matin or their vesper song; in the chirp of insects; in the lowing of herds; in the wind, breezing gently through summer's foliage, or sweeping, with ruder blast, over winter's nakedness; in the ocean, as it rolls in, with gentle swell, to pebbly shore or rocky cave, or lifts up, in answer to the storm, its sublimer anthem; in the rivulet, singing, as it runs, to the flowers that fringe it; and the cataract, making the hills to tremble as they reverberate its majestic chant; in the patter of the rain-drops, and the roll of the thunder. Certain it is, that there is something in nature's music, which appeals to, and accords with, the spirit of a sober thoughtfulness; that, cheerful and cheering as the burden of its strain may be, it yet bears within itself, and stirs within the heart, in the midst of its gladness, and as a part of it, at least as an accompaniment which it would not silence, a tone of plaintiveness.

This mingling of sadness and joy, of which I have spoken, in human experience, is especially realized on those occasions in life which take us back over the track of the past; occasions kindred with those we have previously known and enjoyed, and which stand out to memory with a fixed prominency and distinctness. However joyous they may be in their character, and however joyous, in the main, the emotions they excite; however

welcome their coming, and delightful their stay, — there is yet an under-tone of sadness blending with their joy, a wavy thread of melancholy woven into their robe of gladness; and, with many, it is even as it was with Israel's tribes at the event referred to: sadness shares, almost equally with joy, the heart's dominion. It is not easy to know which predominates, — the plaint of the one, or the chant of the other.

And of such occasions there is none, I think, so prominent, in the general experience of those of this community, as that which brings us together to-day. It is an occasion of rejoicing; so regarded, and so in fact. It wears a face of gladness. It is welcomed with smile and song and hospitable cheer. And yet, feelings allied, at least, to sadness are awakened by it in many hearts, and mingle with and temper its festivities. It is a season of touching memories; when the past of our personal history, the beings and incidents of our earlier years, relive to us. To those nurtured in a New England home, there are no occasions, I think, towards which memory is so minutely faithful as towards these ancient festivals, as they run back among the days of childhood. And as they rise before us, — as the unfading picture of that domestic group, of which we were cherished and happy members, is again unrolled to us, and we gaze and gaze until it seems less a picture than a reality, less a memory than a presence, — there steals in upon the heart a feeling pleasurable, and yet sad; a feeling which we cannot analyze, and which we would not part with, though the breast heaves, and the eye is moistened by its power. That picture, — that group; we are children there. Hearts that know no heaviness; spirits which yield to no depression; hopes that disappointment has not mocked; affections which coldness has not wronged; innocence, peace, unfearing trust, unshadowed happiness, — are ours. We are surrounded by loving and beloved forms. We hear the accents of sweet and gentle voices. We feel the pressure of the fond caress. A father's smile is resting on us, and a mother's glance of love, — true, devoted, changeless love. Those hands are laid, in sweet endearment, on our lifted brow. Those eyes are shedding down into our own the light of their unutterable tenderness; are shedding within our hearts, by their approving gaze, a quiet, but sufficing joy. — It is a picture *only*; and, as we turn away from beholding it, and think of the broken circle, the scattered group, the sun-

dered ties; of forms we miss, and shall for ever miss, from the homes of earth; hearts in whom we so confidently trusted, so fondly loved, and who, to their life's latest hour, returned our confidence and love, — it cannot be but that a shade of sadness should overcast the beamings of our joy. There are those — and they are most of us — who need not go so far for saddening change; to whom the season recalls, with peculiar vividness, the images, ever dear and sacred, of the kindred and companions of later life; — young, happy spirits, twined around our own as they were indeed a portion of them, — the light of our homes, the idols of our hearts; aged and venerable forms, the objects of a fond and filial regard, whose presence was a continual benediction, — to anticipate whose wishes, to smooth whose descending way, a daily satisfaction; associates, endeared by closest intimacy, and devoted services, and truest sympathy, and tenderest love; children of maturer years, fulfilling the hopes that rested on their earlier life, and making the future bright in the promise of increasing excellence. The departed, — the departed, — once with us in a common home; bound up with us in the same household sheaf; protectors and guides of our infancy and childhood, companions and trusts of our riper years; how intimately are ye associated with this returning festival! — “festival of kindred,” it may well be called, and with reference to more than those who are around us. How do these gatherings of the remaining remind us of the gone! How, by this occasion, as by no other, is all that is holiest and dearest in the past brought back to us on a tide of tender thoughtfulness! And shall we love the occasion the less for this its tendency and power? Nay, shall we not the more? What though it *do* awaken sadness! It is a sadness by which the heart is made better. It shall dim but to consecrate the joy with which it blends. Seek not to dispel the sadness, to suppress the tear, as being inconsistent with the occasion, and unworthy of it. They are not so. Surely, it is most fitting, it is most worthy, — the tribute we are thus led to pay to home's dear departed, amid the festive rites which once they shared. They shall share *them* no more; but our fond affections they shall ever share. We miss them from our household group; but at the heart's fireside they shall gather still, cherished guests, while warmth or vitality is there.

Such is one class of memories that breathe a strain of sadness

into the songs of rejoicing which belong more peculiarly to the occasion. There is another class, relating to departed possessions, advantages, comforts, joys, of a more external and worldly sort. The retrospective glance to which the season invites, disposes many to sadness, in the comparison they are led to institute between the present and the past of their history; as respects these. They recall the "Thanksgivings," when it was far different with them from what it is in the present; when they were the favored children of prosperity, and a wreath of rich and manifold blessing was encircling them. How changed their circumstances! How impaired their fortunes! How shattered and fallen the once fair fabric of their earthly hopes! The former days, how much better than these! The remembered temple, how much fairer and more desirable than the existing one! What wonder that the contrast saddens them? It is natural that it should. Philosophize as we may, moralize as we may, concerning the loss of worldly substance as of trifling moment, concerning the sweet uses of adversity, — while we are human, and have our dwelling here, there will be feelings of regret in view of those changes in life which bereave us of what we had learned to prize; of what had become essential, as we may think, though we may err in that, to our happiness. There may be an uncomplaining acquiescence; through the power of a religious faith, there may be true and cheerful submission; and yet, had the good Providence of God so ordained it, we had rejoiced to have had spared to us the good which is removed. Inasmuch as it was seen and felt to be a good, it cannot be otherwise than that its departure should be lamented. Let, then, the tribute-sigh be given at life's unwelcome reverses. Let the shade of sadness therefor come upon our joy. Only, I would say, — and I say it in the name of reason and religion, — beware how you suffer regrets for what you miss, to prevent an appreciation and a thankfulness for what you find. Beware how you overlook or undervalue, in the contrast of the present with the former days, the blessings which yet crowd the present, — blessings which, of themselves, demand the offering of a perpetual gratitude. Let the dirge-like strain which, for a time, the heart must breathe above the wrecks of the past, be lost in, as it mingles with, the swell of an exultant joy. In a word, let not sadness become gloom, become murmuring, become despondency, become discontent. Alas! it is

too often thus. It is a weakness which belongs to our humanity, that of undervaluing the blessings we possess, in a sorrowing thoughtfulness for those which we have lost; that of looking backward in fruitless regrets, until we forget to look upward in pious thankfulness. "The former temple, how much fairer than this!" It comes from the man of diminished income; and the sigh that escapes him at the remembrance of comforts and luxuries which are his no more, is succeeded by no throb of grateful acknowledgment for the unnumbered favors he still retains. It comes from those whom disease has made its captives; and the tear of sorrow at the thought of once vigorous health and joyous freedom is chased by no smile of cheerfulness at the many sources of enjoyment, and some which infirmity has itself unclosed, still open to them. It comes from those whose household circles have been invaded by the destroyer, death; and with the wail of lament which is rising from the depths of their stricken hearts, are no praises mingled for the links yet unsevered of that golden chain.

The blessings in possession! number them! measure them! The attempt could not fail, if we have hearts, to incite to gratitude and to praise. And the blessings we mourn over as departed, are they no longer blessings because of their removal? Have they left nothing inward and abiding as the result of their mission; yea, as the token that it was divine? a good far better than themselves? Is not the experience involved in their possession and their loss; the discipline to which they subjected, and which, as remembered things, they are still subjecting; the influence effected in their stay, and bequeathed at their departure, — are not these something to be prized, and to be thankful for? In a sense, and that a blessed one, there is no gift of the Heavenly Goodness, once bestowed, that can ever be withdrawn. It may be to us, if we will, a possession permanent and immortal. Bodily it may depart, but it shall have within us a spiritual presence. It shall be witnessed to in heart and life, in the elevation and increase of some virtue or some grace.

There are those who understand this, as no words can express it, no assertions convince; who are permitted to *see* how in wisdom and in mercy the circumstances of their lot have indeed been ordered; how the cloud at which they trembled, enwrapped an angel in its folds; how the tears which affliction wrung from them

have freshened and renewed the fading garden of their hearts; how the path into which most reluctantly they turned, so drear was it and unpromising, has led to the realization of a far loftier good than they left to enter it; how disappointment and deprivation, and trial and toil, have but composed the rounds of the ladder of their spiritual ascent. Tell me not that life is full of saddening and mysterious change, — of darkness, of disappointment. I know it. And I know, too, that it is full of God; that over all its scenes and changes, over each individual lot, is a watchful and paternal One, who out of its darkness can bring a brighter than morning's dawn, out of its disappointments a better than earthly hope; who sees the end from the beginning, and is conducting all things to blessed issues. "The voice of weeping," then, there needs must be (not, indeed, to the extent that it is actually heard; for much causing it is not of God, but permitted as a consequence of man's ignorance and perversity); but "the voice of rejoicing" there should ever be, clear and full and overpowering, from all the children of earth, — the rejoicing, if not of experience, yet of trust and of hope.

The occasion which has brought us together is a public one. We are called upon to rejoice and give thanks as a people to-day. It is well that such call should be made upon us. For surely, as a people, as members of this ancient State, and this confederacy of States, there is much that demands of us a grateful recognition. Our past is full of the tokens of a providential guardianship. Our present is beaming with the light of a transcendent prosperity. But there is much also in the position which our nation, through its government, has assumed, — in the course of inhumanity and oppression to which it has lent itself, — that may well sadden the hearts that love her. The tribes, as they came back to Jerusalem, mourned chiefly the departure of an *outward* glory from their land. It was the contrast of their temple, in its former magnificence, with the humble pile which was to succeed it, that caused them to weep in the memories of the past, while they rejoiced in what the present was giving them. Far better this than to mourn the departure of a *moral* glory. Far rather would I see the fair temple of my country's prosperity laid low, than to see her basely compromising her avowed principles, recreant to the promises of the past, and dimming the bright fame that the former generations had achieved for her.

Yes, there is cause for sadness. Let it mingle, as it must, with our rejoicing. If we felt as we ought, the voice of the weeping of the people to-day would almost vie in volume with the voice of their rejoicing. But no: I would not say that. Rejoicing let there be; ay, let its voice ascend over all sadness and misgiving; rejoicing, for the hallowed and inspiring memories which attach to our country's history, and which cannot be torn away; rejoicing, for the rich and priceless privileges which, as a people, we yet possess; rejoicing, for the increasing bands of the faithful, who are gathering around her altars, not to weep only at her criminality, but to pledge themselves to holy strivings to do it away; rejoicing, above all, that God reigns, — the God of our fathers, — who watched over us in those earlier days, who will watch over us still, and whose judgments, however and whenever they shall come, will be nought else but mercies.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS TO A BROTHER IN CALCUTTA.

(Continued.)

EXTRACT FOURTH.

WHAT shall I say to your complaints of my not writing more frequently? I wait sometimes in the hope of having good news to communicate, and sometimes because I feel so sure that the gleam of sunshine on my fortunes is but a gleam, I cannot bear to indulge any exhilaration, as I should do, probably in writing to you. I do not believe, Walter, that there is any sadness like the sadness of a gay person. What a flow of spirits I once had! The children, in their frolics, make me laugh sometimes now; but the sound of my own laughter brings such a sudden pain at my heart!

It is not the one deep abiding grief of widowhood that makes me heavy-hearted, Walter. Though I miss the society of my husband as keenly as I did four years ago, I have grown into a sort of enjoyment of his present happiness, by meditating upon it frequently; and it is a solemn, pleasant thing to love a pure

disembodied spirit, who, I know, is serving his visible God joyfully, without forgetting to love me and our children. Such is my faith. Ah! it is not grief, but anxiety, that oppresses me; not memory of the past, but dread for the future. It is my duty to support and educate these children. How am I to do it?

The young Frenchman who carried all my scholars away so long ago is still flourishing, with a full school, though his wife died soon after he came to L——. Of course, no needlework is taught in his "seminary;" the mothers say plainly that they value other kinds of instruction far more, and that there is no teacher like a *man*. You know I tried schools in two other towns afterwards, and with no better success.

I thought at the time it must be because I lacked some important qualifications as a teacher. But I now remember that in every case I was superseded by a *man*; and I feel that there is a prepossession in the public mind in favor of a male teacher. Even if I had not persisted in teaching the womanly art of needlework, I doubt if I could have obtained patronage against a male competitor.

So it was, you remember, when I opened a dry-goods store. I could not buy my goods as cheaply as men do, and of course could not sell as cheaply; and I know that some ladies actually charged their friends never to go to a "woman's store," unless they meant to be cheated, "things are always so dear there." Then it must be that we cannot buy at the same advantage, and that must be somebody's fault. There must be something wrong, if we cannot buy and sell at prices as low as men do, without being ruined, as I was. Never did I feel more satisfied that I was laboring, as a woman should labor, in a vocation most fitting for my sex, than when I stood behind my own counter. Those who knew all about my business-transactions said that I manifested both energy and judgment; yet the customers flocked into the store of a tall, muscular, powerful young man opposite me, whom God meant for a sailor or a farmer; and I dwindled into a seller of thread and needles, and at last — failed. Oh, the anxiety and final agony, when I found that it must be so! and my thousand dollars half gone!

I have been running over the thing in my own mind, till facts overwhelm me; and I see plainly that we women have not a fair chance in the struggle for support.

You remember how warmly you and all my friends used to admire my reading English poetry, in those happy youthful days when our little circle met from house to house in B——. I trust I was not vain of the accomplishment; but in my utter uncertainty whither to turn, just after my failure in business, I consulted some friends about giving some readings in public; and they begged me not to think of any thing so masculine. I acknowledge that my heart throbbed fearfully at the idea of confronting the gaze of many strange eyes in a public hall; but the love of my children, and the necessity of exertion, would have taught me to control such emotions, and I could have found many a page of literature so well adapted to my voice and feelings that I could have thrown my whole soul into reading, and beguiled the winter evenings with an innocent and refining entertainment. But no! the reader's platform must be reserved for men. I shrunk from the charge of lacking feminine modesty, and so gave up the chance of turning one of the few talents God has given me to any useful purpose. I have not even dared before to tell *you* of this broken plan.

If I can only get along till Arthur is able to exert himself, then will my anxieties cease. He has fine powers; and, if I can but give him an education, he will enter the field with that prodigious advantage of *sex* in his favor. His sisters are as intelligent and earnest as he; but, alas! to how little purpose, so far as their ability to plunge into the terrible struggle for support is concerned! I have some hopes, however, from Fanny's uncommonly fine ear for music; and, young as she is, I have her already in training to become a teacher.

For myself, think how little time I now have for writing to you, my dear brother. I take in needlework; I make fine shirts. It is profitable; but oh, the "song of the shirt" rings in my ears from morning till night! It is "stitch, stitch, stitch!" till my side aches, my fingers ache, my head aches, my heart aches. I do my own housework now, except the help my little girls give me; and sometimes it is all the exercise I have for a fortnight. When a dozen shirts must be finished by a certain day, for fear of offending my employers if I disappoint them, of course I give up the fresh air, and swallow my meals so hastily that they almost choke me; and I sit up so late that I get excited, and

cannot sleep well when I do lay my weary head at last on the pillow.

Oh that I were a man! I cannot help it, Walter. I would that I were a man! No man ever wished himself a woman; no boy ever wished himself a girl. But I do believe that many a struggling, toiling woman has sighed from the bottom of her suffering heart, because she had not been born of the other sex. I can see that even my little girls do almost envy their brother at his studies and his healthful sports. I can understand it, and can perceive how their energetic natures will, for a long time, fret in bonds. Even so far as the physical being is concerned, is it not strange that those whose delicate and nervous constitutions most require exercise in the open air, are, by the customary occupations of their sex, confined almost wholly to the house? If I cannot be a man, I wish I were an Indian squaw. I would work, I would serve, I would tramp the woods with the burden on my back, so that I might be blessed with the strong frame of that much-pitied daughter of the wilds.

"The sea, the sea, the open sea!"

No, it is for the open air that I long and pine. It is my life: body and spirit both crave it.

EXTRACT FIFTH.

And now let me try to remember something of my last letter. I was in a sad state then, and probably said some strange, wild things; for, while I was writing, I felt as if I were going crazy. I was writing on Sunday; all that week, till twelve on Saturday night, I had been putting the needle in and out, in and out! sitting in a close little room, till it seemed to swim round with me; and, whenever I looked up, I saw the flame of the candle wherever I turned my twinkling eyes. After I went to bed, my fingers would twitch, and my back would ache! Ah! how I envied the ploughman!

And when those twelve shirts were finished and sent home, I received twelve dollars. But first I waited seven weeks, and was sick four weeks out of the seven, and ran in debt fifteen dollars!

My dear brother, perhaps I wrote incoherently in my last, ex-

travagantly, foolishly; but I did utter some sober truth, be sure. No man regrets his sex; thousands of women mourn secretly over theirs. What means this tremendous fact? They talk of the anxious lives men lead, on whom falls the responsibility of labor, of supporting a family; but what shall be said of a woman, when the same responsibility falls on her, as it often does? At how many of the avenues to competency stands man, blocking up the entrance! She is thrust back from one; she is scoffed back from another; she is *lured* only towards that which leads to false, fiery gains, that scorch the fingers which grasp them.

I have no restless ambition, no desire of power, Walter. It is not in his public life that I envy man. No, no! After all, I would not become a man; I thank God I am not one. I had a gentle, mighty influence in one heart, and it was kingdom enough for me. I still behold the eyes of my bright manly boy turned reverently to me for counsel, and it is power enough for me. And his fame will be fame enough for me. And the good that I do through him will widen my circle of influence as far as I desire. Yet I still feel that there is something wrong in the customs of society, in the ways of thinking among men about us. Changes have been going on, are going on; and they must, they will go on, for our advantage. I know not what may happen, or what can be done to accelerate them; but it is a comfort to think that God knows. God is providing. All that "right-minded women" need will be given them.

EXTRACT SIXTH.

I remember writing to you, some years ago, in a very bitter mood, because of my womanhood; and you scolded me a little; and, after the custom of your sex, have teased me a little about it in many of your letters since. I have never been able to make you understand exactly what I lamented, or what I wanted. In fact, my own notions are very vague.

I see that hitherto, in the world's history, women have been excluded by custom and prejudice from many employments which they could discharge as well as men. Is it not so?

I see the probability of mighty changes in this respect; and that whatever women can *do well*, they will find opportunities of doing, as readily as men can.

I see that now the labor of women, compared with that of men, is underpaid. One of my daughters is now undermining her constitution as teacher in a public school, for which her salary is half that of a man, who teaches little more than she does, needs no more, and suffers less. And my youngest daughter has obtained a few scholars in music; and, with her exquisite voice and taste, she dares not ask one-third of what Mr. Carnfeldt receives.

EXTRACT SEVENTH.

God bless you, dear brother! Oh, I thank Him from the bottom of my soul. I forget my raging headaches, my half-blinded eyes, my constitution, broken with toil and anxiety, in the thought of seeing you once more. And you are coming home, as you proposed years ago, with enough for us all. Generous brother!

And yet the thought comes back, When did a woman ever make a fortune? Why must woman be dependent?

Ah! something within me asks these questions; but I believe it is a higher something which whispers that it is sweet to lean on those who love. Arthur is prospering too; and the time has come when he declares that he must see his mother and sisters toil no more beyond their strength.

But if you and he support us, dear Walter, will there be nothing in the world for us to do? Ah! in how many ways we can work for you, for him, for others! Some things in woman's lot may and will be mended. But how many are beautifully right!

L. J. H.

WHEN the time for saying *Why* comes, let us say it with a stout heart of faith; let us wrestle with truth, as Jacob wrestled with the angel, and refuse to part from it, until it gives us its blessing. But to precipitate this time in children is unwise and unkind, and produces minds all sail and no ballast, which are driven along before every puff of wind, in momentary danger of upsetting; minds which catch fire from their own restless revolutions. — *Hare's Victory of Faith*.

KNOWLEDGE A HANDMAID OF RELIGION.

MY DEAR B——, I confess myself surprised by your letter just received. You tell me that you are astonished to find a man of so varied and extensive learning as Mr. A. at the same time an earnest and devout Christian; and you ask me why his case is so rare; why eminently intellectual men are generally immoral or atheistic; why knowledge is so sorely at variance with religion; why ignorance is the mother of devotion. Now, I certainly am willing to answer you; but I must do it by denying all that you seem to hold as certain facts.

You remember, doubtless, that, as Christian and Hopeful went down from the Delectable Mountains along the highway toward the city, they met, at the entrance of a little crooked lane which led from the country of Conceit, a very brisk lad, whose name was Ignorance, who vexed the simple pilgrims by his arrogant readiness to jangle on subjects of which he had no knowledge. Bunyan has shown here, I believe, his wonderful knowledge of human nature, and his recognition of a truth I hope to convince you of, namely, that ignorance is no help to true religion. Certainly, I believe that religion is eminently a *sentiment*; that all devoutness of life and all spiritual growth must originate in the regeneration of the heart; that Christ, as a Teacher and as a Redeemer, speaks first to the affections. The history of the race and the experience of each man attest the truth of Byron's famous line, which was an intense reality to the poet's own baffled and wretched life:—

“The tree of knowledge is not that of life.”

But we must not forget that they grew side by side in the centre of Eden, their intertwining roots fostered by the same sunshine and the same rain. The commandments of Christ are exceeding-broad: he recognizes no one-sidedness as a preparation for entrance to his kingdom; he calls for the consecration of the *whole* man to the Father's service; he bids us love the Lord our God with all our mind, as well as with all our heart and all our soul. Surely God has not implanted in us a natural and irresistible desire of knowledge, and at the same time made the gratification of that desire the necessary ruin of our souls.

You tell me that the apostle says, "Knowledge puffeth up," and "knowledge shall vanish away." But I think, if you study his meaning, you will find that he does not censure all knowledge, but only knowledge "falsely so called," and knowledge devoted to the service of Satan. Paul himself is an illustrious proof that knowledge is a vast power for good, a strong support to religious faith, when it is penetrated with the spirit of Christ. His long study at the feet of Gamaliel, his thorough acquaintance with Jewish and Pagan learning, his keen and subtle logic, fitted him to grapple successfully with Jewish rabbis and Greek philosophers, and to declare the unknown God to the Athenians on Mars' Hill, or the pure and meek Redeemer to the proud and licentious Romans, and to place Christianity in a clear and strong light for the guidance and trust of all believers. What! do not you and I, my friend, owe to Paul's knowledge as well as to John's love? Can you remember how, during the black midnight of the Dark Ages, the light of Christianity was kept glimmering in the cloisters of learned monks, and that it was by their faithful guardianship that the truths of Christ's teachings were preserved for us, and still say religion owes nothing to knowledge? Have you forgotten, that Erasmus and Luther and Melancthon were famous for their learning as well as for their piety; and that, had it not been for their liberal studies, we might to-day be the servants of the religious hierarchy, whose policy is to keep its followers in the bondage of ignorance? Have you not read in the records of prisons and almshouses, that ignorance is the fast friend of vice and want?

Yet, in spite of these warning vices from the past and present, you ridicule the idea of knowledge ever being a helpmeet to religion; and say that "if we may but get contentedly through the world, and safely to heaven at last, all our earthly knowledge is utterly worthless." Will you forgive me if I say, that such a wish for contentment is the offspring of a selfish and querulous discontent, rather than of a Christian resignation and trust? That is not a healthy soul which is *always* looking to heaven as a mere resting-place for the weary. Such a spiritual tone ill accords with the constant and active benevolence which is here, and may be there, the test and the employment of virtue. We are not made pilgrims here to walk with eyes so fixed on heaven that we stumble and fall over the duties of earth. To be sure, we ought

to live contentedly; but we must not seek contentment in idleness or dotage, but in doing every duty to God, to man, and to ourselves. We must cultivate our intellects as well as our hearts; or our Lord, at his coming, will find some of our talents buried in the earth. Our consciences may not be burdened with the memory of flagrant crimes; but sins of omission are as fatal as sins of commission. Our faculties are to be educated, as well as our evil passions subdued. If we would be "chimed to our grave with the music of a good conscience," we must not only eschew knowledge of falsehood and evil, but grow in knowledge of truth and goodness. If we would have our life end in heaven, it must be, not a stagnant pool, but a running stream.

It may be, that all our earthly knowledge is infinitely small, when compared with what we may attain in an eternal future; still it is not utterly contemptible. The processes by which we learned the alphabet were long since forgotten, together with all the drudgery of early discipline; yet, without them, we could not have outgrown imbecility. So our earthly knowledge may be but the dry alphabet of the heavenly knowledge, and yet the former may be essential to the latter. Even now, we get a high — though not the highest — apprehension of the wisdom and goodness of God through the intuitions and perceptions of our intellect. As we understand more of the laws of nature and of the proximate causes of things, we are more strongly forced to bow in humility before the Infinite Intelligence, in whose nature those laws originate, and those causes centre. Our knowledge becomes vastly significant, when in the instincts of a bee we recognize the work of an Infinite Geometer; when in the growing leaves and opening buds of the summer flower we discern a symmetry and a plan which attest the workmanship of God.

Knowledge is not incompatible with love. The affections are not necessarily palsied by the increased activity of the intellect. But knowledge is rather a strong stimulus to piety, reverence, and love. The stronger beatings of the heart quicken the brain also into a more vigorous life. The children of true knowledge are not pride and self-sufficiency, but humility and awe. Only charlatans in science presumptuously advertise the possession of unlimited powers. Men, as Lord Bacon has said, must enter the kingdom of ideas, as well as the kingdom of heaven, like little children. The higher we ascend in knowledge, the deeper will be

our faith, sincerity, and truthfulness. "A *little* learning is a dangerous thing," not full and deep learning. Bacon, in his Essay on Atheism, says: "It is true that a little philosophy inclineth man's mind to atheism, but depth in philosophy bringeth men's minds about to religion; for, while the mind of man looketh upon second causes scattered, it may sometimes rest in them, and go no farther; but, when it beholdeth the chain of them confederate and linked together, it must needs fly to providence and Deity." The greatest and wisest men are always ready to repeat the sublime words of Newton, and count themselves "but children gathering pebbles on the shore of the boundless ocean of truth." It was a beautiful tradition of the Jews, that among the archangels of heaven there are cherubim as well as seraphim, — angels of perfect knowledge as well as angels of perfect love.

There is a tendency, I think, at this time to undervalue knowledge as a help to religion and to civilization. Men are ready enough to seek knowledge at the bidding of pride or ambition or curiosity, but not to consecrate it to Christ. The practical and the useful are claiming too exclusive a sway in prejudice to the just demands of the theoretical. The practical sciences are trying to push the classics from their vantage-ground in education. Reproaches are cast upon the science of theology; and ministers are told to study men's hearts and lives more and books less, to live amid the realities of action, and leave the mouse-eaten folios of learning to lie entombed in the thick dust of libraries. Now, there is some truth in this. A pedant or a mere scholar cannot be a true minister, any more than a "dictionary of dates" can be a history, or than a skeleton without flesh and blood and a living soul can be a man. It is doubtless better to have the piety of a "Dairyman's Daughter" than the learning of a scoffing Diderot; but it is better than either to have the learning and the piety of a Newton or a Chalmers. The gospel, that makes men free, "is not the patron or the parasite of ignorance." The "brisk lad" that came from the country of Conceit was ferried over the river by Vain Hope; but he was carried back to the door in the side of the hill; and the last vision of Bunyan's dream was, that there is a hell even from the gate of Heaven, as well as from the city of Destruction.

"Add," says the inspired apostle, "add to your faith, virtue;

and to your virtue, *knowledge*." From the violation of this precept has come much of the world's sin and misery. Men have stopped with an ignorant though devoted faith, with an unenlightened though sincere virtue; or they have sought to make knowledge the ground-work of their progress, without faith, without virtue; forgetting that, while Solomon has said "that the soul be without knowledge, it is not good," a far greater than Solomon has said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven, and all these things shall be added unto you."

But you must be weary of this epistolary preaching. Next time I will try to sermonize less and gossip more. Yours,

E. S.

UNHISTORIC WORTH.

TRUE worth is for the most part unhistoric, and so of all the beneficent causes and powers included in the lives of simply worthy men; causes most fundamental and efficient, as regards the well-being and public name of communities. They are such as flow in silence, like the great powers of nature. Indeed, we say of history, and say rightly, that it is a record of *e-vents*, — that is, of turnings out, points where the silence is broken by something apparently not in the regular flow of common life; just as electricity, piercing the world in its silent equilibrium, holding all atoms to their places, and quickening even the life of our bodies, becomes historic only when it thunders; though it does nothing more in its thunder than simply to notify us, by so great a noise, of the breach of its connections and the disturbance of its silent work. Besides, in our historic pictures, we are obliged to sink particulars in generals, and so to gather, under the name of a prominent few, what is really done by nameless multitudes. These, we say, led out the colonies; these raised up the states and communities; these fought the battles. And so we make a vicious inversion of the truth; representing as causes those who, after all, are not so much causes as effects, not so much powers as instruments, in the occasions signalized by their names, — caps only of foam, that roll conspicuous in the sun, lifted still by the deep under-swell of waters hid from the eye. — *Dr. Bushnell's Kings and Queens of Homespun.*

ANECDOTAL.

MRS. KNOWLES affected to complain to Dr. Johnson that men had much more liberty allowed them than women. "Why, madam," replied the doctor, "we have all the labor and the danger, and the women all the advantage. We go to sea; we build houses; we do every thing, in short, to pay our court to women."

"You reason very wittily, but not convincingly," replied Mrs. Knowles. "Now, take for instance the matter of building: the mason's wife, if she is ever seen in liquor, is ruined; the mason may himself get drunk as often as he pleases, with little loss of character; nay, may let his wife and children starve."

"Madam," said Johnson, "if the mason does himself get drunk and let his family starve, you must consider the parish will oblige him to find security for their maintenance. We have different modes of restraining evil, — stocks for the men, a ducking-stool for women, and a pound for beasts. If we require more perfection from women than men, it is doing them honor. And women have not the same temptations we have; they may always live in virtuous company: men must mix with the world indiscriminately. If a woman has no inclination to do wrong, being secured from it is no restraint. I am at liberty to walk in the river Thames; but, if I were to try it, I should soon be restrained in Bedlam."

"Still, doctor," reasoned the lady, "I cannot help the thinking it a hardship that more indulgence is allowed to men than women. It gives a superiority to men to which I do not see how they are entitled."

"It is plain, madam, one or the other must have the superiority," replied the doctor. "As Shakspeare says, 'If two ride on a horse, one must ride behind.'"

"But," said Mr. Dilly, "I suppose, sir, Mrs. Knowles would have them ride in panniers, one on each side."

"Then, sir, the horse would throw them both," answered Johnson.

"Well, I hope there is another world where the sexes *will* be equal," pursued Mrs. Knowles.

"That is being too ambitious, madam," retorted Johnson, "*we* might as well desire to be equal with the angels. We shall all hope to be happy in the future state; but we must not all expect to be happy in the same degree. It is enough if we be happy according to our several capacities. A worthy carman will get to heaven as well as Sir Isaac Newton; yet, though equally good, both will not have the same degrees of happiness."

David Hume used to say, a little miss, going to dance at a ball in a fine new dress, was as happy as a great orator after having made an eloquent and applauded speech. Dr. Johnson remarked, "A pail does not hold as much as a tub; but, if it be equally full, it has no reason to complain." Mr. Dilly thought this a clear illustration of the phrase, "One star differeth from another star in glory."

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

The Natural History of the Human Species: its Typical Forms, Primeval Distribution, Filiations, and Migrations. Illustrated by numerous Engravings. By Lieut.-Colonel Charles Hamilton Smith, President of the Devon and Cornwall Natural Hist. Society, &c., &c. *With a Preliminary Abstract of the Views of Blumenbach, Prichard, Bachman, Agassiz, and other authors of repute, on the subject.* By S. Kneeland, Jun., M.D. Boston: Gould & Lincoln, 59, Washington-street. 1851.

COLONEL SMITH has condensed into a volume of moderate size the researches of a long and laborious life; presenting matter of great interest to scientific students in a scientific phraseology. So much learning on the subject of the distribution and physical characteristics of the human race has hardly been compressed before into so small a compass. On the question, so much agitated of late, of the original unity or diversity of origin, the author leans to the latter hypothesis, with Prof. Agassiz, Van Amringe, and others; though he adopts the impartial method of exhibiting the arguments on both sides, leaving the reader to form his own opinion. The engravings of the different types are very perfect. Col. Smith seems throughout to have pursued his investigations with

the enthusiasm of the antiquary and the genealogist combined, with little of a poet's expression.

Arvine's Cyclopedia of Anecdotes, of Literature, and the Fine Arts.

This serial publication, in the hands of Gould & Lincoln, has reached its fourth number, and the one thousand six hundred and sixty-fifth story. One would hardly suppose there could be such an enormous amount of anecdotes in literature. Read continuously, a collection like this would be as insufferably tedious and unprofitable, as an individual whose conversation is composed entirely of the same material. It needs a wise man to use anecdotes well; but, wisely used, they would enliven many a dull discourse. A large proportion of the pages before us are occupied with historical and biographical facts of a really important character, — the editor being careful to discriminate between history and imagination; and one can scarcely dip in anywhere without finding amusement.

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The Boa Constrictor; Johnny and Maggie; The Princess Unca; Lucy's Canary; Christmas Eve; Rose Tremaine; Just in Time; The Morning Walk."

Slavery in the United States; its Evils, Alleviations and Remedies.

It is not necessary to assent to every statement or argument in a treatise like this, in order to appreciate its exalted spirit, admire its judicial calmness, or acknowledge its power. To find that, after all attempts and failures, a topic so beset with points of irritation and prejudice on every side, embittering men's temper just in proportion as it involves their interests or their pride of opinion, and making them the more intolerant as it enlists their moral sympathies on the one side, or their consciousness of loyalty on the other, can be treated at once ably and dispassionately, — affords a satisfaction of no ordinary kind. It positively buttresses up our general confidence in human right-mindedness, and clarifies the mephitic air. One such contribution of clear, strong, wholesome thought to a vexed question of public and profound concern, like American slavery, is worth all the ephemeral matter that gets abroad, under the name of "splendid writing," in a year. To have made that contribution is honor and labor enough for a year of any educated man's life. And although we find it extremely difficult to moderate our hopes of negro emancipation within the limits proposed by the views of this article, we are ready to believe that the scheme it contemplates promises as practicable and as early a solution of the problem as any yet definitely proposed, while it offers certain and vast benefits to Africa. It is probably known to most of our readers, that the pamphlet before us is reprinted from the North American Review, and is written by Rev. Ephraim Peabody, D.D., of Boston.



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NOTICE.

THE design of the MONTHLY RELIGIOUS MAGAZINE may be best learned by a reference to the contents of its several volumes. The Editor's endeavor is to make it to enforce the duties, illustrate the truths, and strengthen the hopes, of a practical, renewing, and cheerful faith. His highest ambition respecting it is, that it should furnish interesting and improving reading for families, and, by a devout spirit, a sympathy with all the truly humane movements of the times, and a good measure of literary care, at once quicken the zeal and encourage the trust of those who are seeking to attain "the life that is hid with Christ in God." Besides original articles of a miscellaneous character, each Number contains a Sermon, not before published, and the Religious Intelligence of the month.

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Communications relative to the business department must be addressed to the Publisher.

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